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ScienceDirect

Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 197 (2015) 652 – 658

Procedia
Social and Behavioral Sciences

7th World Conference on Educational Sciences, (WCES-2015), 05-07 February 2015, Novotel
Athens Convention Center, Athens, Greece

The Role of Films in Literature Education at Departments of German Language and Literature in Turkey

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Abstract

Nowadays the impact of technological advancements have been increasing in daily life gradually, therefore we encounter plenty of innovations in educational field. Especially, audiovisual materials which are used in education are relevant to technology directly so this fact directs us to examine the usage of the audiovisual materials in literature education. Film makes the reception of literary work easier by using audiovisual elements directly and the aspect of equipment which is used, film is qualified as technological benefit for the departments of literature. A great deal of literary works is adapted into films and literature has been a source for film industry and it is in progress. In this research we have evaluated whether or not the departments of German Language and Literature in Turkey use films which are as an indicator of technological progresses and in case they are used, which types of films are preferred and what would be learning outcomes by analyzing curriculums of related departments.

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Peer-review under responsibility of Academic World Education and Research Center.

Keywords: Usage of Film in Education, Film Adaptations, Training Materials in Departments of German Language and Literature, Audiovisual Method in Literature Education

1. Introduction

In the era of communication and speed, advancements about education are coordinated with technology; hence it is necessary for these advancements to be followed by the educational departments. The thesis of philosophers such as McLuhan and Lyotard which suggests the direct link of knowledge acquisition in information era and epistemological approaches to media technologies brings forward the topic of reshaping the education again with

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new tools. (cf. Meyer, 2011;14). Especially universities as places of production and transmission of knowledge with these advancements in respect of knowledge must analyse roles of conveyors and transfer changing communication tools and ways of communication to the structures of universities (cf. Schwalbe, 2011;179).

In line with this requirement our study focuses on the field of literature education, because literature education which dates back many years ago is required to be updated as other educational fields in regards of both curriculum and methods continuously in order not to be outdated. These updates progress with technological innovations toward using faster and more active methods in educational field.

2. Literature Education and Films

As known in literature departments, printed texts are used as basic material. But day by day "speed learning methods" are developed for student to accelerate his/her learning process. While student-centered approaches especially in learning processes necessitate use of different materials, course materials vary from course books which base on word to internet usage (cf. Arkan, 2009;2). Teaching methods which are used in digital axial age wriggle out from printed methods and progress towards teaching methods which serve for multi-sensation and centre efficiency and speed in teaching. Audiovisual method which is one of those methods is envisioned to be used effectively through films in teaching German language and literature. Film media as a teaching material has effective and various usage areas for both adaptations of literary works and documentaries in teaching. In this regard, films as one of subbranches of media science are commonly used from the beginning of twentieth century as audiovisual material both military and national educational field and in this direction by constituting various institutions incorporate into curriculums. After these developments in Western countries, in the fifties, "student film center" (cf. Yakar, 2013;32-33) was established in our country but films did not take much place in curriculum.

3. Film Adaptations

New medias (tv, radio, movie etc.) are based on old medias (literature, painting, music etc.) in many respects and over time new and old medias effect each other and maintain to be involved in an interaction continually (Aytac, 2005;19-20). Especially cinema interacts with almost all branches of art which precedes itself. Cinema which is affected by branches of art such as music, painting and theatre relatively engages with literature. Films which have scenarios adapted from literary works represent the essential part of cinema. Literary works of writers such as Goethe, Shakespeare, Kafka and Steinbeck are turned into screenplays many times and also today adaptation of literary works is in progress.

These adaptation films which use literature as a source can be regarded as profit in terms of literature teaching. Because in point of expression, solid and fast film media contains in many literary element in itself. The statements of Korat "dialogue of order cinema is visual equivalent to literature even speech technique of character in theatre and novel" summarizes connection of literature and cinema (Korat, 2010;138). Even though cinema has motions of camera and other technical resources today, it gets its specific narratological classification thanks to literature and is based on that (cf. Lohmeier, 1996:189). Literature is also impressed by narratological resources of film. In literary works such as "Berlin Alexanderplatz" and "Ulysses" Alfred Doblin and James Joyce chose their narrative forms from cinema and their stream of consciousness technique depended on cinema. Moreover, in modern works, usage of time bases on montage technique in film editing (cf. Kayaoglu, 2009:117). With this closeness and interaction, usage of films in teaching literature is not a preference out of field on the contrary; it is an element which is related to literature directly or indirectly.

Nowadays thanks to technological opportunities, films reach the large masses faster than books and thus they can be more efficient. Adaptation films make more tremendous impact than literary works. For instance, after "Death in Venice" of Thomas Mann was turned into a screenplay by Luchino Visconti, it aroused considerable interest. And also "Perfume" of Patrick Suskind was adapted by Tom Tykwer and interest in literary works has increased relatively after this film.

Features of literary characters become more concrete with adaptation films and due to the fact those films are engrossing, they have influenced on analyzing of story line and text (Yakar, 2013;22). And consequently, learning process accelerates and time is saved. When we consider that many literary works belonging to German literature

were turned into a screenplay, it can be said that the number of works which are involved in curriculums increases proportionally with adaptation films which can be used in literature departments. It is known that academic member who gives a lecture in literature departments generally complains about incompetence of discussing literature works on the basis of time limitation. Thanks to adaptation films, students may encounter with a lot more literary works and compare those works with others. The usage of films adapted directly from literature with a supported audiovisual narrative will provide students to evaluate those works perceiving better and it will also ensure to be updated teaching methods based on usage of printed materials by reviewing in these departments.

As it can be seen with occurrence of film as a media tool, literary works are not as dependent on writing and books as before. Here are two important points of narration, in other words symbolic code of world experience is not limited to reading experience as privileged and partaking in value of art is possible for more people in era of technique manufacturing (cf. Aytac, 2005;13).

While some adaptation films go parallel with work in terms of narration and story and also remain loyal to literary work, some adaptations are only inspired by work and tell a different story. To be or not to be loyal to work is up to director or scenarist. But literary scientists waive objections that most of adaptations works lose their genuinity. Florian emphasizes that loyalty to work has been discussed for many years and as a consequence of all adaptations should be perceived as a production of a different media and it should be handled accordingly (cf. Florian, 2008;20-22).

In recent conditions which speed and consumption remain in the forefront, literary work has become attractive by filming for reader and audience. Literary text advances as a translation of director through film. With the statement of Adorno “since art has became one of consumer products by coming under the domination of culture industry, its cherry side became artificial, fake and enchanted. On the other hand many criticisms about imagination is limited and reader passivates towards audience are recognized by many literary scientists and usage of adaptation films in education has not a positive look on these departments.

While in films, figures and narration location is served directly to viewers through a visual creation, in literature it is a pre-condition to express these through detailed imagery. Whereas a film frame converts a fictional text directly to a visual element directly and drags the audience to the current of plotline ceaseless, written work allows reader to animate events in the world of his/her own by making a gap between descriptions (Poppe, 2007:11).

Therefore it must be considered that factors such as keeping alive reader’s fantasy world with literary text continually and descriptive power of writer lose power with narration through film.

Opposite to all these criticism, knowledge and experience of academic members in the departments which film adaptations will be used in education become prominent Because if film adaptations which are literary work-free do not take in curriculum, the connection between literary work and film can strengthen through the film media. An adaptation which is entirely independent from work, has a different character, place and time and creates a new story on its own and acquired only by inspiration can bruise the bond which needs to be established with work. For instance, Raskolnikov of Dostoyevski has been an inspiration to scenario by many directors in the world and films which were made in this direction were introduced as a film adaptation of Crime and Punishment. But these films do not show parallelism with novel of Crime and Punishment in point of character, time and other features. For this reason, it is necessary for lecturer to have an active directive role about his/her student's bond with the literary work and about how they whether will they meet this literary work through only book or through movies and also directive should be directive about what the student will take into consideration in this comparison. And through this method, in conjunction to providing a minimalization of misperception of adaptation movies which seem like a translation in terms of both fiction and narrative, there is also a chance of presenting student a different output in a topic like intertextuality.

To get objective commentary and come to agreement intersubjective are requirements at the heart of literature science (Neuhaus, 2003:190). Thus events such as reception and interpretation of literary work are key concepts. According to Gokturk, reader who approaches a text with a certain fund of reading, a social cultural view, a ball of belief and expectations[...] In fact, every reader’s comprehension of a text is directly proportional with dimensions of his/her own life and conscious especially with his/her linguistic competence (1989; 116). His approach needs to be defined film adaptations produced by directors as a new reading. This reading gives students an opportunity to perceive concepts of reception and interpretation through film adaptations in the shape of reception and

interpretation of director. And this shows that adaptation films are handled as an interpretation and literary work can be interpreted distinctly depending on world of reader. It offers also an opportunity to make comparison between literary work and adaptation film through media interchange.

When evaluating adaptation films, another point to take into consideration is that cinema has its own language and even if it is effected by other art branches, it says its' word with its own language. After admitted that there will be two unlike structures in case of translation of literary language to visual language, things seen as problem can be overcome. Unless the reality that it is natural and compulsory is not admitted, it is not possible to interpret adaptations made from literature to film accurately (cf. Korat, 2010;136).

4. Usage of Documentary Films

Besides of the usage of adaptation films in literature science and education, it is also possible to use audiovisual materials in courses such as literature history and cultural history which take part in curriculum of language and literature departments. Nowadays usage of documentary in history courses is in demand; therefore we encounter many studies on this topic. As known, literature emerges by being influenced from the all occasions of life (wars, depressions, natural events etc) and thus, history of literature also takes shape around occasions mentioned.

In line with this assertion, the usage of documentary films which reflect that period's characteristics that are prepared in harmony with curriculum and content will provide the student to be able to visualize that period in their minds and will let them render the literary text more accurately. Documentaries which can be used at literary lectures will both make the education more beneficial and more attractive for students whom are raised with traditional printed way of studying. The accurate teaching of literary history and the reanimation of the period will provide literary works and writers to be interpreted more accurately.

Moreover, while in Turkey at departments of German Language and Literature a part of profile of student consists of people who were born and raised in countries which speak German, the rest of them learn German as a second foreign language in schools of Turkey or meet with German in preparatory classes before undergraduate education. This situation induces that as well as literature education, process of foreign language teaching continuous keep on.

It is known that audiovisual method is used as an effective teaching method in foreign language teaching. Audiovisual aids which are used in this method help teacher to establish a natural environment in class and to learn a foreign language and attract student attention in such environments and accordingly it assures them success (cf. Arslan ve Ergin, 2010;65). In departments of German Language and Literature with the usage of adaptation films and documentary films which are prepared in German makes use of audiovisual method in foreign language teaching effectively. Films will help to support linguistic competences of students.

5. The Usage of Films in the Departments of German Language and Literature in Turkey

In line with these inferences, the role of films in the departments of German language and literature in Turkey in terms of plan and content of course is studied. According to this, in two departments of twelve different universities "film" is taken part in as an elective course. One of these is "Film Researches I and II" in the VII. and VIII. semesters of German language and literature department of Namık Kemal University (Namık Kemal Üniversitesi Ders Programı, 2014). But because of the fact that in this department there is no student who study in VII. semester, we can not find any arranged course plan. So it could not be examined in point of content.

There is a course "Literature and Film" as an elective course in V. semester in the department of German Language and Literature in Ege University. Adaptation films such as *The Comfort of Strangers* of Ian McEwan directed by Paul Schrader, *Death in Venice* of Thomas Mann directed by Luchino Visconti, *The Birds of Daphne du Maurier* directed by Alfred Hitchcock draw the attention as subjects which will be used in this courses (Ege Üniversitesi Ders Katalogu, 2014).

Subjects such as "the relationship between cinema and literature", "from writing to visual process of translation", "intermediality", "how to read a film with scientific methods", "using literary methods on cinema" comprise the content of course and evaluates directly form of two different transfers of artwork both in literary and scientific sense.

The aim of this course is that students can comprehend how literary arts turn into a movie and screenplay, explain requirements of information and media era as adapting and in a sense how cinema and visual media take the place of literature in age of information. It is an indicator of close relationship between literature and cinema and awareness about its today and future. Apart from this department which handles relationship between literature and cinema, enhances this relation with adaptations and prepares curriculum in educational planning in terms of content and plan of course, there is no similar application in the departments of other universities. In this sense, as a course, the relationship between literature and cinema can not find place in majority of German Language and Literature departments in Turkey.

6. Literature Education and Media

In this digital era which we live together with technology in field of German Language and Literature, a crisis is mentioned in several places of world. Therefore new ideas for encouragement of literature education are put forward. Around the world one of reasons of decrease of preferability of departments of literature is digital era and place of books in this era (cf. Turkowska, 2012;223). Because literature loses its leading medium position (Leitmedium) and entertainment, education, informing functions due to the fact that audiovisual medias are faster, easier, and simultaneously have a wider range of opportunity. Aytac indicates that in Germany tendency of last years is giving up limitation the philology with examination of literary text and insert proceeded intermedia communication and intercultural field (Aytac,2005;46). Therefore, in 70s as a branch of literature science chairs of media studies are established in departments of German Language and Literature in Germany. In last twenty years, these chairs become widespread as an academic discipline by separated from departments of German language and literature, they appear on its own. Because there is “a new paradigm” in literary science from now on (cf. Kayaoglu,2009;90).

When we look our country today, except its daily use the description of “media” is usually made not properly and presentation of “media organs such as radio, television and periodical publications” refers to cognitive problem (cf. Kayaoglu, 2009;90). As spirit of time description of media is accepted as all kinds of tool by which communication is provided. In other words, it means more than just a media organ, it has a meaning which contains all art branches such as literature, cinema, painting, and sculpture in itself and reaches the larger masses. From this statement “Among people all kinds of communication requires a media”, when communication is said, it will be more accurate to define all materials as one “media” (Kayaoglu,2009;28). Hence media education that brings student literacy of media which a bachelor needs to acquire, becomes prominent as a field in German language and literature education in Germany and other European countries (cf. Ozil, 2008;189). When German Language and Literature departments' curriculums and course contents in Turkey are considered, it's generally seen that the topic of "media science" is being addressed very scarcely. In our study, 12 universities in Turkey which are giving lectures on bachelors level has been studied about how many parts "media science" covers in course content and curriculum of these universities. The courses of these departments related to media science and subbranch of this science are stated in the table below.

Table 1. German Language and Literature departments which are giving lectures in Turkey

University	Course
Akdeniz University G.L.L.	-
Ankara University G.L.L.	-
Ataturk University G.L.L.	-
Cumhuriyet University G.L.L.	-
Ege University G.L.L.	Literature and Film
Firat University G.L.L.	-
Hacettepe University G.L.L.	-
İstanbul University G.L.L.	Media Seminars I- II-III-IV
Marmara University G.L.L.	-
Namık Kemal University G.L.L.	Film Researches I ve II
Sakarya University G.L.L.	-
Selcuk University G.L.L.	-

In the result of search, Istanbul University German language and literature department curriculum includes in courses named “Media Seminar I-II-III-IV” like other departments in Germany. It can be said that after media seminars, it is aimed to create awareness on media subject and students of German language and literature comment on media. It is another indicators of goal-oriented prepared course in point that subjects such as definitions of various medias as introduction to media and internet, photograph and film, creation and development of writing, analyses of scientific conceptions are included in course contents (Istanbul University,2014).

We can say that media science has not taken part in other departments of German Language and Literature in Turkey yet and this “new paradigm” does not get necessary effect in other universities. In today's conditions it is needed the curriculums formed via medias which center speed communication such as internet, radio and cinema as well as printed materials. Because in the other medias mentioned, literary works are included and they use mostly literature as a source. Audio books, radio plays, e-books and adaptation films are a few examples. Besides in German language and literature departments thanks to this new tendency, students have an opportunity for employment. In Germany, after media science education students of German studies can be employed as a scripter, editor in several press Corporation.

According to a survey of Texas University, contribution of audiovisual education materials to education is summarized as: “people remember %10 of what they read, %20 of what they hear, %30 of what they see, %50 of what they hear and see, %70 of what they say and %90 of what they do and say, so this shows that the more active senses they use means more permanent the learning process becomes (Arslan and Adem, 2010;65).

In conjunction with the usage of audiovisual materials on field of education from the point of persistency and efficiency of education is a great profit, it becomes a necessity in educational field as time progressed.

7. Conclusion

In reaction to this study, the usage of both adaptation films and documentary films in German language and literature departments is benefited. Students who encounter more literary works will gain a broader viewpoint, on the other hand, their knowledge of foreign language education will get stronger by supporting, they will learn literature history more tangibly via documentary which is prepared audio visually and will grasp era prosperities better in the guide of this information. When inspected from this point of view, usage of films in German Language and Literature departments will be beneficial in perspective of media change and with media finding itself a spot in these departments, media science will be able to find itself a spot. And through this method, a type of German Language and Literature education which is similar to Germany and other European countries will be possible to achieve.

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